

10:10 – Taking action on climate change

Tracey Todhunter, 10:10's strategy adviser on community engagement, talks about role of local voluntary organisations and community groups in supporting collective action on climate change.

In the past, very few environmental campaigns in the UK have been successful in uniting diverse organisations in a national drive to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions. So what makes the team behind 10:10 confident they can succeed where others have failed? The simple answer is a dogged determination to bring a culture of co-operation and collaboration to the environmental movement and unite the whole country in a simple plan to cut energy demand by 10% in 2010.

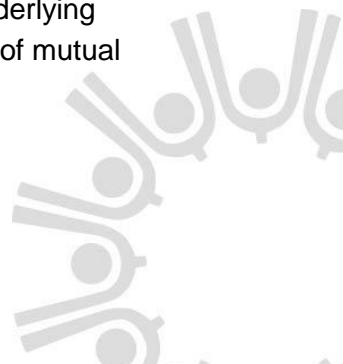
Targeting the third sector

This is why our early outreach activities, including the training events we held in Bristol, Manchester and London, deliberately targeted the third sector. The sector has a history of supporting people and communities in making positive behaviour and lifestyle choices in many areas such as healthy eating and housing, not just the environment. There is plenty of research proving that people find collective action easier than acting alone, which backs up my 20 years experience of working with communities. This is where the third sector excels. Voluntary and community groups (run by and for the people they support) engage people and offer practical support which makes behaviour change seem more tangible and achievable. The success of movements such as Low Carbon Communities and Transition Initiatives rests on the passion, knowledge and commitment of small groups of people determined to pass on their skills and experience. Many of these voluntary groups benefited from Every Action Counts (a Defra-funded programme which was established in 2006 to inspire community and third sector action on climate change and sustainable development) and the five key themes of saving energy, travelling wisely, shopping ethically, saving resources and caring for your area are equally relevant in 2010.

Community Checklist

As part of the community outreach materials at 10:10 we have produced a Community Checklist, highlighting innovative approaches to carbon reduction in 10 communities across the UK. Each of these projects began with a small group of volunteers. Many of them used the support available through local infrastructure organisations to develop thriving voluntary organisations and social enterprises. Although the approaches are diverse, the underlying principles of working together, sharing knowledge and a culture of mutual support are evident in each of them.

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Key areas for reducing your carbon footprint

Throughout this year, the team at 10:10 will be offering advice and support to individuals, communities, businesses and organisations such as schools, hospitals and sports clubs. We hope that NAVCA members will play a key role in helping 10:10 reach individuals and communities, so that we can provide this support through a trusted and respected medium. This will help us take what began as an online pledge campaign into the homes and streets of people across the UK. Over the next 12 months, we'll be asking everyone who has signed up to 10:10 to make a 10% cut in four areas of energy usage:

- Electricity
- Fossil fuels for heating (eg coal, oil, gas)
- Miles driven by car
- Flights.

Act now and act together

We've chosen these aspects of energy use because they are simple to measure and we know that a reduction across these four areas can really make a difference to the country's energy demand – if we all act now, and act together.

We are working with the Energy Saving Trust and Carbon Trust to give everyone in the UK access to free telephone support (see contacts at the end of this article). We hope that NAVCA members will get involved in ensuring that community groups can access locality-specific information and advice about how communities and individuals can work to tackle climate change together.

Information and advice

- 10:10: **www.1010uk.org**
- Energy Saving Trust: **0800512 012** (individuals, families and communities)
- Carbon Trust: **0800 085 2005** (for businesses and organisations).

Contact:

Tracey Todhunter

T: 07595291504

E: [communities@](mailto:communities@1010uk.org)

1010uk.org

W: www.1010uk.org

